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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to assist institutions of higher education with the process of organizing, conducting, and reporting the result of their self-study in preparation for evaluation by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. The guide is divided into the following chapters: (1) self-study in accreditation (purposes and the Commission's expectations); (2) organizing, planning and conducting the self-study; (3) the evaluative criteria in the self-study process (includes suggested questions relating to the criteria); (4) reporting the self-study (including the purposes and structure of the report and institutional requirements and data forms); and (5) focused evaluations (report structure). An annotated list of resources for self-study, including resources from the Commission, 13 selected self-study reports, and other resources, is appended. An index of Commission policies and a list of Commission members and staff are also provided. (KM)

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A GUIDE TO SELF-STUDY FOR COMMISSION EVALUATION

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COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
1988-89

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PREFACE

The Commission has made conducting a program of periodic self-study a primary obligation of each institution seeking or continuing affiliation with it, both to establish a basis for its evaluations and to foster the attitudes and structures of self-evaluation that every institution needs to survive and progress.

The Commission staff have prepared this 1988-89 edition of *A Guide to Self-Study for Commission Evaluation* to assist institutions preparing for evaluation by the Commission as they organize and conduct their self-study processes and report the results. Together with the *Handbook of Accreditation* and the *Manual for the Evaluation Visit*, the *Guide* provides institutions and team members with information on the principles, policies, and procedures currently governing the Commission's accreditation process. The *Handbook* is the core of this set of documents, and both the *Manual* and this *Guide* assume their reader's familiarity with it. The *Guide* is especially addressed to institutions, but it is also intended for use by Consultant-Evaluators. All three documents are revised and republished on a regular basis Significant changes in policies and procedures occurring between publications are reported in the Commission's *Briefing* newsletter. Questions about current policies and procedures should be directed to the Commission office.

This edition of the *Guide* includes new references to comprehensive evaluations with special emphases. The *Guide* is organized as follows:

- **Chapter I** outlines the purposes of self-study and the Commission's expectations for self-study.
- **Chapter II** offers advice and suggestions for establishing a self-study committee, developing a self-study plan, and organizing and conducting the self-study process.
- **Chapter III** provides a discussion on the Evaluative Criteria in the self-study process and offers a series of suggested questions related to each of the Criteria.
- **Chapter IV** is a newly revised chapter which highlights the elements of the Self-Study Report essential to the Commission's needs and includes a section on the Self-Study Report for Candidacy.
- **Chapter V** is addressed to institutions preparing for focused evaluations.
- An **Appendix** includes updated information on resources available on self-study from both the Commission and other sources.

The *Handbook*, *Guide* and *Manual* include an index which tells the reader where information on the Commission's various policy statements can be found in each of the three documents.

The Commission staff hope that this *Guide*, together with the *Handbook* and *Manual*, will answer most of the questions about the self-study process and report that institutions and evaluation team members will have. Please notify us if they do not.

CHAPTER I

SELF-STUDY IN ACCREDITATION

Purposes of Self-Study in Accreditation

The self-study process in accreditation serves two purposes: to provide the information necessary to determine that the institution meets the Commission's General Institutional Requirements and Evaluative Criteria and to encourage institutional improvement.

Insisting as it has since the thirties that institutional accreditation be based on an institution's capacity to fulfill its mission, the Commission requires from the institution sufficient evidence on which to make an accrediting decision. Almost three decades ago, the Commission determined that institutional self-study best provides the evidence. Recognizing that careful self-evaluation is crucial to any institution's effectiveness, the Commission has continued to require periodic self-study as a major component of the accreditation process. The Commission requires that an institution formally examine itself, assess its strengths and concerns, and plan how to capitalize on those strengths and eliminate or alleviate those concerns. In doing so, an institution documents its present effectiveness and its strategies to continue and improve that effectiveness.

The Commission's Expectations of Self-Study

While the Commission does not prescribe the details of an individual institution's self-study process, it does require that every self-study process for candidacy or accreditation be guided by several general principles:

- **that it is built on ongoing self-study efforts.** Ideally, the self-study for accreditation should flow naturally out of ongoing processes of institutional self-evaluation.

- **that it begins with a plan.** The Commission believes that an effective self-study process must serve both internal and external purposes. Foresight and thoughtful structuring of the self-study process enable institutions to gain maximum benefits from the time and energy expended.

- **that it focuses on the institution.** The Commission does not accredit departments or programs, although evaluating an institution in terms of the Commission's Evaluative Criteria

requires that all of the institution's component parts be examined. Ultimately, the information gathered through evaluation of each part must be used to formulate an evaluation of the institution as a whole.

- **that it is *evaluative* rather than *descriptive*.** It is not enough for a Self-Study Report simply to describe the programs, operation and environment of an institution. A Self-Study Report which only describes the institution does not provide the information needed for the Commission's evaluation process.

- **that it identifies clearly the institutional strengths which must be maintained and the areas in need of improvement.** Whether the self-study process confirms the adequacy of on-going evaluation and planning or whether it suggests new priorities and strategies, institutional improvement should always be a major goal.

- **that it produces a report showing that the institution satisfies the appropriate Evaluative Criteria.** A self-study process for candidacy or accreditation can serve a variety of internal and external purposes, but—whatever else it may do—it must lead to a report which includes explicit documentation that the institution meets the Commission's General Institutional Requirements and fulfills the appropriate Evaluative Criteria.

CHAPTER II

ORGANIZING, PLANNING, AND CONDUCTING THE SELF-STUDY

Initiating the Self-Study Process

For an affiliated institution, preparation for Commission evaluation begins approximately two years before the evaluation visit when the Executive Officer of the institution receives a reminder letter from the Commission. For an applying institution, preparation begins when the institution is advised by the Director of the Commission that the self-study process can commence. At this point and throughout the self-study process, the Executive Officer's role is crucial. When the Executive Officer makes it clear by both word and action that the self-study is an institutional priority, the value and success of the process are enhanced. To indicate the importance of the self-study to the institution, the Executive Officer should appoint the self-study coordinator and the steering committee, should formally charge them with their task, and should provide them with the necessary support to carry out their charge, including support staff and clerical assistance.

Appointing the Steering Committee

The choice of the self-study coordinator and the members of the steering committee is an important factor in establishing the direction and tenor of the self-study. The self-study coordinator ordinarily chairs the self-study steering committee, serves as a resource person to the self-study work committees, and coordinates the preparation of the Self-Study Report.

Those chosen for the steering committee should be knowledgeable and energetic, and should have the respect of the institution's various constituencies. It is important that they be able to understand the importance of the institutional nature of the process. Each Executive Officer will make these appointments according to his or her personal style of administrative decision-making, but Commission experience suggests that a broadly representative steering committee is likely to receive the cooperation necessary to carry out its task. The primary task of the steering committee is to develop a self-study plan and coordinate its implementation.

Preliminary Planning

Before developing its formal self-study plan, the steering committee should:

1. Review institutional materials and processes:

- **Determine institutional goals for the process.** If various constituencies within the institution hope that the process will accomplish certain ends then these expectations should be made explicit and incorporated into the Steering Committee's plans. If the institution has specific objectives it hopes to accomplish through the process, then those objectives should figure prominently in the plan. Some institutions may choose to emphasize certain select topics within the self-study process.

- **Review existing committee structures.** A self-study process need not be constructed from scratch, nor need it involve a new layer of committees. The steering committee should decide how best to integrate the structures for self-study with the structures already in place.

- **Survey the institution's existing evaluation and planning processes.** Institutions engage in such processes for a variety of reasons, including the expectations and requirements of their governing boards and those of external agencies to which the institutions are related. Some institutions have developed evaluation processes as a part of applications for or as conditions of external funding. Others engage in periodic evaluation for continued recognition by specialized accrediting agencies. Increasingly, institutions have developed internal evaluation processes to inform decision-making. Rather than duplicate work that has already been done, the steering committee should inventory and use the information gained through these other evaluation processes in its self-study for the Commission.

- **Review the documents of the institution's most recent comprehensive evaluation by the Commission and all subsequent Commission and/or staff actions.** This review helps to establish a context for the current evaluation. Moreover, the evaluation team receives all of these documents; it will want to know how the institution has changed as a result of its interaction with the Commission. It is also useful to review the institution's last Self-Study Report, but be aware that, because of significant change in Commission policies and procedures, the substance and organization of that document may not be an appropriate model for the current process.

2. Review Commission materials and processes:

- **Read the *Handbook, Guide,* and *Manual* to be informed fully of the Commission's procedures and its expectations.** In particular, the Committee should study carefully the Commission's Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation or Candidacy in the *Handbook of Accreditation* and in this *Guide*. Since these Criteria are the foundation of the Commission's evaluation process, the institution's Self-Study Report must provide evidence of their being met.

- **Review recent correspondence from Commission staff about the nature of the visit.** The reminder letter sent to the institution's Executive Officer provides information on the evaluation. The letter also includes an invitation to the Commission's **Self-Study Institute** which the Self-Study Coordinator and other members of the Steering Committee are urged to attend.

- **Examine the institution's current Statement of Affiliation Status.** Because the SAS defines the status of the institution with the Commission, its accuracy **is critical.** Read with care Chapter III of the *Handbook* and pp. 26-32 of the *Manual* for a better understanding of the flexibility of the language in the SAS. Do not hesitate to call Commission staff for clarification, particularly if you find inaccuracies or decide to request changes.

Developing a Self-Study Plan

The steering committee's first major task is to plan a self-study process that both fits the needs of the institution and satisfies the requirements of the Commission. The steps the steering committee should take to develop this self-study plan (which is sometimes called the "prospectus" or "design") are relatively straightforward. It should:

- identify the objectives of the self-study process;
- identify existing evaluation and planning processes and determine how best to integrate these into the self-study process for Commission evaluation;
- formulate and implement committee structures consistent with the objectives;
- establish timetables;
- develop a preliminary outline of the Self-Study Report;

- propose the evaluation methodologies to be used to gather and analyze data and specify the data which must be gathered and analyzed;

- establish the reporting mechanisms—writing responsibilities—which will lead from data-gathering to the completed Self-Study Report.

It is in designing a strategy for self-study that the institution can be most creative. Many institutions choose a comprehensive approach to the evaluation; others may choose to speak briefly to the Evaluative Criteria and to emphasize selected special topics with a view toward significant examination of those areas for improvement. For example, the self-study process may be used as an opportunity to reconsider and revise the institution's mission. The institution may wish to study enrollment trends; or to assess the impact of a new governance system; or to begin work on a long-range plan; or to evaluate and revise such a plan. These and other objectives can be compatible with the self-study for accreditation, provided that the self-study process yields the information necessary for the institution to demonstrate in its Self-Study Report that it meets the Evaluative Criteria for Candidacy or Accreditation.

Because the Evaluative Criteria cut across functional areas of an institution, one significant task in developing the self-study plan is to plot clearly how an evaluation of the functions and operations of the institution will provide evidence that the Evaluative Criteria for Candidacy or Accreditation are met.

Once a preliminary plan is completed, it should be submitted to the Commission staff for review.

Conducting the Self-Study

The ways in which the self-study process is conducted will vary according to the scope, nature and emphasis of the self-study plan. They will also vary according to the size, complexity and character of the institution. No single pattern is appropriate to all institutions.

Ad hoc committees are a common mechanism for self-study and should be created in accordance with the self-study plan. It may be wise to include on committees, or at least to provide an opportunity for reactions from, persons who are not directly engaged in the area under study (e.g., student services should not be studied by student services personnel alone). It is helpful to involve those whose interests might be affected by the area (e.g., a student on the student services committee).

A key to the effectiveness of the institutional committees is providing for adequate communication among the various committees and between each committee and the steering committee. And, regardless of how the institution is organized for self-study, there should be some means for communicating with the total institutional community. While it is not necessary to have everyone in the institution on a committee, the steering committee needs to establish means of informing all the institution's constituencies of preliminary findings and developments throughout the self-study process. It should also encourage their responses.

CHAPTER III

THE EVALUATIVE CRITERIA IN THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

The Evaluative Criteria as Bases for Evaluation

Evaluation requires that the quality of an object be judged in relation to some measure. In the Commission's evaluation for accreditation the object is the postsecondary institution; the basis upon which the institution is judged is its ability to meet the **Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation:**

1. the institution has clear and publicly stated purposes, consistent with its mission and appropriate to a postsecondary educational institution;
2. the institution has effectively organized adequate human, financial and physical resources into educational and other programs to accomplish its purposes;
3. the institution is accomplishing its purposes;
4. the institution can continue to accomplish its purposes.

The institution's evidence that it fulfills the Evaluative Criteria is contained in the Self-Study Report, and that report then serves as a basis for an external evaluation by a team of Consultant-Evaluators representing the Commission. This chapter provides a general discussion of the Evaluative Criteria and some suggested questions related to each. Additional comments on the Evaluative Criteria are found in Chapter II of *A Handbook of Accreditation.*

Evaluative Criterion One

"The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes, consistent with its mission and appropriate to a postsecondary educational institution."

An institution's mission and purposes provide the rationale for both its establishment and the objectives of its current operations. They reveal the philosophical stance of the institution's designers toward education and provide a framework for maintaining the institution's integrity and planning its development. They point to the heritage of the institution and how it fits within the framework of higher education. They explain how it endorses the traditions basic to higher education such as protecting academic and intellectual freedom and encouraging intellectual breadth and depth.

Educational institutions serve many purposes. Some limit their endeavors to a single task or to a small number of related tasks; others address themselves to a great number of diverse tasks. In a system of higher education characterized by diversity, it is crucial that each institution determine those purposes to which it will commit its limited resources.

The single-purpose institution or the institution with a small number of closely-related purposes is able to formulate a statement of its purposes as a whole. With a large, complex university this might be possible only at a very high level of generality, and each major unit or division may have a statement of purposes consistent with the mission of the larger institution.

There are many types of institutional purposes. Some are intellectual, some are affective; some are professional and occupational, some are "liberal"; some involve the pursuit of knowledge through research, others involve public service; some relate to values and attitudes, and others relate to training and skills.

As they are used here, "purposes" and "consistent" refer to the multiple and specific ends the institution wishes to achieve in order to carry out its more general "mission." Most institutions have broad, general statements of mission that are relatively brief. Statements of purposes—of long- and short-range institutional goals, of programmatic objectives—are more specific and detailed. Statements of mission and purposes provide a guide for planning and operation as well as a framework for decision-making—about admissions and retention policies; about curricular and extracurricular programs; about the hiring, retention, tenure and promotion of faculty; about the institution's organizational structure; and about its financial and physical resource needs.

An institution's purposes will normally consider its role in its region and community, as well as in the nation. Its statement of purposes should be flexible enough to allow it to respond to new challenges and opportunities, but firm enough to allow it to resist pressures for haphazard or unplanned growth or retrenchment. Its statement should also establish the character and priorities by which the institution can cope with the many demands which it must face.

Accountability means that an institution accomplishes what it says it will do. While it is not a requirement that every purpose lend itself to quantitative measurement, it is important to consider the degree to which the institution's purposes lend themselves to qualitative and/or quantitative measurement.

An institution has a responsibility to keep the public informed of its educational goals and should publish a statement of mission and purposes in a critical public document such as a catalog.

Evaluative Criterion Two

"The institution has effectively organized adequate human, financial and physical resources into educational and other programs to accomplish its purposes."

This criterion focuses on the adequacy of an institution's resources and the appropriateness of their organization for the accomplishment of its purposes. Areas which may be evaluated under this criterion include: institutional governance and decision-making, human resources, financial resources, physical resources, educational programs and curriculum, support services, and institutional services. Many institutions consider the communities in which they are located to be critical to their ability to accomplish their missions. In assessing how they fulfill this criterion, those institutions should include in appropriate places the human, financial and physical resources of the community which are of value to them. If service to the community is part of the institution's mission, then any assessment of this criterion will include the programs and services provided for the community.

Resources. An institution's available resources play a large part in determining the quality of the education it provides. Without sufficient human, financial and physical resources an institution cannot possibly achieve its purposes. Evaluation of an institution's resources should always be placed in the context of the institution's mission and purposes. This aspect of the institutional self-study, sometimes characterized as input analysis, evaluates general areas.

- ***Human Resources.*** An institution's ability to accomplish its purposes is dependent on the students, the faculty, and the support staff it attracts and develops. The institution's purposes should be reflected in its student recruiting and admissions policies, as well as in the educational and other support services it provides to the students it enrolls. Its expectations of those students and its view of their potential for achievement must realistically consider the level of ability they bring with them. High school grades, class rank, the results of standardized aptitude tests and achievement tests, recommendations from high school personnel and others, evidence of special interests and abilities, personal qualities revealed in interviews—these and other measures of student readiness are commonly employed to assess that ability. There is

no single standardized test score, for example, that every institution should use in its admissions decisions, but the criteria it does use should be consistent with its purposes, and with its instructional and other resources.

The quality of its faculty and instructional staff is critical to an institution's ability to achieve its purposes. The faculty and staff must be competent to accomplish the purposes the institution has set for itself. Therefore, the particular kinds of competencies the institution will seek in potential faculty and staff will vary according to its particular character and purposes. Proficiency in classroom teaching, for example, is often regarded as more significant in undergraduate programs than in graduate schools, where a scholar-apprentice relationship prevails. Institutions preparing students to enter occupations will usually be as interested in selecting faculty on the basis of work experience and occupational proficiency as on the basis of advanced degrees. Academically oriented institutions will emphasize possession of such degrees. Research oriented institutions, on the other hand, will emphasize research competence. The point is that the recruitment of faculty should be consistent with the institution's stated purposes, and so should its criteria for making tenure and promotion decisions.

Other groups of instructional and support staff—learning resources, admissions and financial aid, counseling—should also be selected and evaluated on qualifications that are consistent with the purposes of the institution as a whole as well as specific components of it.

- ***Financial Resources.*** An institution must have adequate financial support, properly administered, to provide the instructional and other services which are called for in its stated purposes. It should also be able to demonstrate that its budgeting, its accounting procedures and its audits reflect sound financial practices.

The budget of an institution is a key document since, if properly constructed, it expresses the institution's priorities and plans. The institution's balance sheet and operating statement are also central to evaluating its financial management. They complement the budget since, while the budget is an expression of the institution's immediate priorities and plans, its financial reports are a gauge of its past priorities and achievements and a projection and basis for its future.

It is impossible to establish generally applicable levels of acceptable income and expenditures that are valid for all institutions; in fact, it is not even possible to establish such levels for all institutions of the same type. Instead, the financial structure of each institution must be evaluated in terms of the resources it provides for the institution to accomplish its purposes, and the efficiency with which those resources are administered.

There is no single pattern of "correct" distribution of income from various sources (tuition and fees, legislative appropriations, endowment earnings, annual gifts, grants from government and other sources, research contracts). An analysis of the trends evident in the distribution of an institution's sources of income, however, can be useful in understanding its financial situation. Similarly, there is no one pattern of expenditures that may be considered best, but an analysis of how the institution spends its funds clearly has meaning for evaluating its commitment to realizing its stated purposes.

- ***Instructional and Physical Resources.*** The physical plant, including buildings, grounds, maintenance, and equipment on campus as well as off should also be evaluated in terms of the Criteria; as should instructional resources such as the library, laboratories, and computer services. These physical resources must be adequate to accomplish the institution's purposes, and the institution should be able to provide evidence of this.

Organization. The institution's organizational patterns (including governance and administration) should be evaluated since the organization of resources determines how well they are used.

Patterns of institutional governance vary from institution to institution as do mechanisms for decision-making and implementation of those decisions. The obligations and responsibilities of each of the elements of the institutional community should be clear; so should the relationship between the administration and the institution's governing board or boards. In the United States, the ultimate governing authority of most institutions rests with lay boards representative of both the public interest and the interests of particular constituencies. The board should establish policies for the institution; translating those policies into action is the responsibility of the administration and the faculty. An institution's self-evaluation should relate its particular governing structure to its purposes and should examine that structure's relationship to the institution's ability to accomplish those purposes.

The increasing cost and complexity of higher education have often led supporting groups, both public and private, to establish coordinating boards. The extent to which such governing boards take part in the governance of institutions varies. If such a board affects the institution, its activities should be evaluated.

Programs. An institution's academic and support programs are central to the task of fulfilling its mission and purposes. An evaluation of them should include assessment of such things as appropriateness, rigor and viability of major degree programs; the breadth of supporting academic programs (minors, core curriculum, general education, developmental courses); and the level of institutional support (faculty, facilities, etc.) for the programs. Such a review should include as well an evaluation of the major documents which delineate the educational programs—catalog descriptions, program brochures, course syllabi—to assure that the documents are accurate and useful. How an institution evaluates these programs, how it develops new curricula, and how it assures the adequacy of its overall educational offerings in fulfilling its mission and purposes should also be included.

Some institutions conduct widespread continuing education and off-campus programs; others have special programs for the adult student. Study abroad programs can be an integral part of an institution's educational opportunities. Athletic programs frequently have a substantial impact on the institution. These programs should not be forgotten or passed over lightly.

Support programs, particularly those involving student services and learning resources, should receive careful attention. Residential campuses will differ markedly from commuter campuses. Research universities will have needs different from colleges. Development and alumni programs are often critical to institutions, and an assessment of them should be included.

Evaluative Criterion Three

"The institution is accomplishing its purposes."

It is not enough to demonstrate clarity and appropriateness of purpose or adequacy of resources and organization; the institution must be able to demonstrate positive results as well. An institution must consider the broad range of institutional outcomes if it is to measure its effectiveness in meeting its purposes. Each stated purpose implies a set of results to be obtained.

For example, an institution may have taken as one purpose the recruitment and development of "outstanding" faculty members.

The measure of its success may be found in comparing the actual faculty characteristics against the institution's definition of "outstanding." An institution having as a purpose the generation of new knowledge through research might measure its achievement of purpose by examining what its research record is and what it has accomplished: papers and books published, research students trained, grants and other external funding, research in progress. An institution concerned with student development apart from formal instruction needs to consider how students change during the college years; measures, including such informal ones as faculty opinion, can be appropriate ways to determine how well this purpose is being achieved. Consequently, evaluating an institution's success in accomplishing its purposes will usually involve assessing a wide variety of structured and unstructured, curricular and extracurricular experiences. It will also require studying how each facet of the institution is actually contributing to those experiences.

A central concern of educational institutions is the educational achievement of students. Longitudinal studies of student grades during college provide valuable information on faculty opinion of student achievement. Follow-up studies of what students do after leaving the institution (and where they do it) give insight on how well the institution's educational programs are serving its students. Entrance tests such as the SAT and ACT batteries and subject matter tests are indicators of the outcomes of the admissions process; when combined with exit tests (such as the GRE) they can show some of the effects of the educational program on the students.

Evaluative Criterion Four

"The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes."

This criterion speaks to the institution's potential for continuing effectiveness, and the Self-Study Report must provide evidence that such continuing effectiveness is likely. Past and present success as well as able leadership, adequate resources, and sound planning speak to an institution's ability to respond to future challenges while maintaining its effectiveness and improving its quality. The institution's plans for improvement resulting from the self-study effort also speak to this criterion.

The institution should identify and discuss the key indicators of stability. Many institutions have a long record of responding creatively and constructively to challenges. Many have the strong support of religious groups, state legislatures, and so forth. Such factors say much about an institution's ability to continue to carry out its mission.

To continue to accomplish its purposes, an institution must confront problems and be alert to opportunities. In the self-study process, the institution should identify plans and structures which should maintain those strengths and resolve those concerns. No institution is so excellent that it need not seek ways to make improvements. Each self-study process should identify those opportunities for improvement and suggest ways in which the opportunities can be realized.

Effective planning structures provide the means to modify goals, develop programs, alter methods of instruction, cope with shifting levels and sources of support, and continually monitor institutional vitality. It is never enough simply to identify the existence of a plan or of a planning committee. Relating the findings of the self-study process to the institution's plans should give some evidence of the effectiveness of the institution's planning processes.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

EVALUATIVE CRITERION ONE

Some questions the institution may wish to consider in its self-study process related to Evaluative Criterion One include:

1. What are the institution's published mission and purposes?
2. How do the institution's mission and purposes relate to the basic charter or statutes?
3. Are the mission and purposes clearly and consistently stated and accepted by students, faculty, administration, governing boards and the community at large?
4. How does the institution support its claim that its mission and purposes are appropriate to a postsecondary educational institution?
5. In what ways can the institution relate its educational programs and activities to its stated mission and purposes?
6. How easily can the institution measure its success in meeting its stated purposes?
7. How does the institution review and revise its mission and purposes?
8. In what ways do the mission and purposes enhance or inhibit processes of change?
9. What are the implications of recent or impending institutional changes on the institution's mission and purpose?

EVALUATIVE CRITERION TWO

Some questions the institution may wish to consider in its self-study process related to Evaluative Criterion Two include:

Governance and Administration

1. How is the institution governed?
2. How has governance changed over time?
3. In what ways does the system of governance assist or hinder the institution in carrying out its mission and purposes?

4. What is the administrative structure of the institution?

5. How has this structure changed over time?

6. In what ways does it assist or hinder the institution in carrying out its mission and purposes?

Human Resources

1. What are the characteristics of the institution's human resources—students, instructional staff, administrative staff, support staff, governing boards? (Descriptive characteristics may include number, gender, age, academic or experiential background, degrees, aptitudes, and others.)

2. How have these characteristics changed over time?

3. In what ways do these characteristics assist or hinder the institution in carrying out its mission and purposes?

Financial Resources

1. What are the characteristics of the institution's financial resources? (Include sources, amounts, allocation and reallocation, budgetary procedures, and others.)

2. How have these characteristics changed over time?

3. In what ways do the current financial resources assist or hinder the institution in meeting its needs and in carrying out its mission and purposes?

Physical Resources
(including library, instructional resources, and laboratories)

1. What are the characteristics of the physical facilities and equipment of the institution?

2. How have these characteristics changed over time?

3. In what ways do they assist or hinder the institution in meeting its needs and carrying out its mission and purposes?

Educational Programs and Curriculum

1. What are the characteristics of the educational programs and learning experiences at the institution? (Be sure to include study abroad programs, intercollegiate athletics, off-campus programs, special programs offered only at certain times of the year, etc.)

2. How have these characteristics changed over time?

3. In what ways do these programs and learning experiences assist or hinder the institution in meeting its needs and in carrying out its mission and purposes?

Institutional Services

1. What services does the institution provide to develop and improve its human resources (i.e., student services, faculty and staff development programs)?

2. How have these services changed over time?

3. In what ways do these services assist or hinder the institution in carrying out its mission and purposes?

4. What services does the institution provide to the communities of which it is a part (the local community, professional groups)?

5. How have these services changed over time?

6. In what ways do these services assist or hinder the institution in carrying out its mission and purposes?

EVALUATIVE CRITERION THREE

Some questions the institution may wish to consider in its self-study process related to Evaluative Criterion Three include:

Quality of Student Achievement

1. How does the institution define the quality of student achievement needed to fulfill its mission and purposes?

2. How does the institution measure the quality of student achievement (e.g., transcripts, placement records, test scores, graduate follow-up studies, etc.)?

3. How do those measurements help to confirm the institution's claim that it is accomplishing its purposes?

Quality of Administrative and Educational Services

1. How does the institution define the quality of administrative and educational services needed to fulfill its mission and purposes?

2. How does the institution measure the quality of administrative and educational services (e.g., research, publications, in-service training, performances, evaluations, awards, evidence of due process and academic freedom, etc.)?

3. How do those measurements help to confirm the institution's claim that it is accomplishing its purposes?

Quality of Institutional Life

1. How does the institution define the quality of institutional life needed to fulfill its mission and purposes?

2. How does the institution measure the quality of institutional life (e.g., retention of students and faculty, student and faculty morale, alumni responsiveness, etc.)?

3. How do those measurements help to confirm the institution's claim that it is accomplishing its purposes?

Quality of Contribution to Outside Communities

1. How does the institution define the quality of its contribution to outside communities needed to fulfill its mission and purposes?

2. How does the institution measure the quality of its contribution to outside communities (e.g., community support, professional offices held, etc.)?

3. How do these measurements help to confirm the institution's claim that it is accomplishing its purposes?

Other Evidence

1. What other kinds of evidence does the institution use to demonstrate its effectiveness?

EVALUATIVE CRITERION FOUR

Some questions the institution may wish to consider in its self-study process related to Evaluative Criterion Four include:

Past and Present Experience

1. How does the history of the institution help to demonstrate that it can continue to accomplish its purposes in the future?

2. How do the current characteristics of the institution help to support the institution's claim that it can continue to accomplish its purposes?

Plans for the Future

1. What plans does the institution have to maintain or enhance its human, physical, and financial resources?

2. How do these plans help demonstrate that the institution can continue to accomplish its purposes?

3. What changes in organization, programs and services does the institution foresee and how does it plan to effect those changes?

4. How will the implementation of these changes affect the institution's ability to continue to accomplish its purposes?

Continuing Planning Processes

1. What are the institution's ongoing planning processes and how were they developed?

2. How will the institution's planning processes assist it to meet future needs?

3. How does the institution evaluate its planning processes?

Impact of the Self-Study Process

1. What plans does the institution have to maintain strengths and alleviate concerns identified in the self-study effort?

2. How will the findings and recommendations of the current self-study process be related or integrated into the ongoing institutional planning processes?

CHAPTER IV

REPORTING THE SELF-STUDY

The Purposes of the Report

An institution's Self-Study Report plays specific roles in the Commission's processes:

- it serves as the institution's formal application for initial or continued accreditation;
- in summarizing the purposes and findings of the self-study process, it demonstrates the institution's ability to analyze its effectiveness and develop plans for its own improvement;
- it provides evidence that the institution fulfills the Commission's Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation;
- it succinctly summarizes information necessary for the evaluation visit, the review process, and Commission action.

The report should be a well-written, readable *narrative*, not a collection of tables, charts, and graphs. It should be a concise yet thorough *summary* of the findings of the self-study process, not a point-by-point or questionnaire-by-questionnaire replication of it. It should be written with the other materials its readers will have access to in mind. Since the Self-Study Report is a part of a set of materials—which includes Basic Institutional Data Forms, faculty and student handbooks, and the catalog—it need not repeat at length information that its readers will find elsewhere. The documents for comprehensive evaluations are listed in the *Manual* Appendix C.

The Structure of the Report

There is no single way to organize the Self-Study Report. Each institution is encouraged to present its report in the manner best suited to its own purposes and needs, flowing from its self-study plan and process. However, while there are various ways to structure the Self-Study Report, its uses in the Commission's evaluation process require that *every* report contain three essential elements:

- an **introduction** which provides the context for the evaluation;
- the **body of the report** which, regardless of how it is organized, includes an evaluation of the institution in terms of the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation;

- **a final section** in which the institution makes its request for the affiliation sought, as well as any changes requested in its Statement of Affiliation Status.

The Introduction

The first essential element of every Self-Study Report addressed to the Commission is a clear, concise introduction which provides certain information to give the reader a context within which to read what follows. This introduction should describe:

- ***The purposes of the report.*** The purposes of the report should be specified, so that readers will understand what follows. One purpose will be to gain or continue accreditation, but there may be other purposes as well.

- ***The self-study process which led to the report.*** How committees were established and staffed, the methods used to assure appropriate participation in the process, any special features of the self-study plan should all be discussed.

- ***The organization of the report.*** Because each institution may organize its report's contents differently, a brief explanation of the basic structure of the report is of great assistance to readers.

- ***A summary of the accreditation history of the institution.*** This brief section should summarize when the institution first became affiliated with the Commission, when it was first accredited, when it last underwent a comprehensive evaluation, and any focused evaluations and/or changes approved by the Commission since the most recent comprehensive evaluation.

- ***How the report will present the institution's response to the most recent NCA report.*** Since the visiting team receives copies of the most recent comprehensive Team Report and formal institutional response, as well as copies of subsequent focused reports and formal responses, and information on any other changes approved by the Commission, the institution should comment on where and how the current Self-Study Report will treat concerns identified by previous Commission reviews. The report may treat the institution's subsequent actions to eliminate or alleviate those concerns in a variety of ways (e.g., in the introduction itself, as part of the sections of the report devoted to the areas to which the concerns were relevant, or in a separate chapter), but the way the concerns will be addressed in the report should be described at the outset.

- ***Changes and/or significant developments since the most recent comprehensive evaluation.*** The Commission's requirement that all institutions affiliated with it be evaluated periodically is partially designed to monitor the changes that institutions undergo. Significant changes that have occurred since the last comprehensive evaluation should be explained in the introduction so that the evaluation team will understand the current character of the institution.

- ***Unusual aspects of the institution.*** The introduction should orient the reader to the special qualities, programs, structures which the institution thinks distinguish it. The better informed Commission representatives are, the better able they will be to consider the institution in terms of its own mission and purposes.

The Body of the Report

The body of the Self-Study Report may be organized in a variety of ways, **but it must include an evaluation of the institution in terms of the Commission's Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation** as discussed in the previous chapter.

Some institutions structure their reports around the Criteria; others choose to organize their reports around functional topics with a concluding chapter in which each criterion is explicitly mentioned together with a description of where and how the body of the report substantiates the claim that the criterion is fulfilled. Some institutions might have structured a self-study process around special projects; their Self-Study Reports will emphasize those projects but will include a chapter or chapters which provide evidence that the Evaluative Criteria are met.

The Summary

In the final section of the Self-Study Report, the institution states its request for the status sought, and justifies any changes it wants in its Statement of Affiliation Status. The institution's rationale for each of its requests will be a summary judgment supported by reference to the salient points discussed in the body of the Self-Study Report. Its rationale for the status sought should refer to the General Institutional Requirements and the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation.

General Institutional Requirements

The Self-Study Report must also demonstrate that the institution meets the General Institutional Requirements. This requires examining specific details about its programs, organization, operation and public disclosure. Commentary on the GIRs is

found in Chapter II of the *Handbook*. Documentation that the institution meets the GIRs can be provided as Appendix A of the Self-Study Report.

Basic Institutional Data Forms

Each institution is required to complete a set of Basic Institutional Data Forms. These forms, which are sent to the institution by the Commission, ask for certain kinds of quantitative information to assist the team in its qualitative evaluation. The forms may be bound into the Self-Study Report as an appendix or may be submitted with the report as a separate document.

The Self-Study Report for Candidacy

Like the Self-Study Report for initial or continued accreditation, the Self-Study Report for initial or continued candidacy must contain three essential elements. The type of information required for all three elements is quite similar to the report for accreditation. However, the second element, addressing the Criteria, differs because the Evaluative Criteria are different.

- *Evaluative Criterion One:* **"The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes, consistent with its mission and appropriate to a postsecondary educational institution."**

  This Evaluative Criterion is the same for accreditation.

- *Evaluative Criterion Two:* **"The institution has effectively organized adequate human, financial and physical resources into educational and other programs so that it is accomplishing its immediate purposes."**

  This differs from the second Evaluative Criterion for accreditation in that it speaks of accomplishing immediate purposes, which acknowledges that a candidate institution is not yet fully developed to the point at which it has the ability to accomplish all of its purposes. In addition to having organized effectively its current resources, a candidate must give evidence that it is accomplishing its current purposes. By requiring the inclusion of documentation of institutional effectiveness, this criterion differs from the second Evaluative Criterion for Accreditation. It also differs in that it requires that the candidate—in addition to having organized its current resources effectively—must be accomplishing its current purposes.

- *Evaluative Criterion Three:* **"The institution is following realistic plans to acquire and organize any additional resources needed to accomplish its stated purposes."**

This directs attention to the candidate's plans for development within the candidacy period. It requires that the candidate demonstrate that it has conducted a self-study which has identified its strengths and areas of concern as well as additional resources needed and has done the necessary planning—for students, faculty, staff, curriculum, financial and physical resources—so that it can realistically be expected to accomplish all its stated purposes within the candidacy period.

- *Evaluative Criterion Four:* **"The institution has the potential to achieve accreditation within the candidacy period."**

  A candidate institution develops a plan and timetable to achieve accreditation in six years or less. The plan and timetable should be appropriate and realistic.

  In demonstrating that it meets this criterion, the institution must consider each of the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation and indicate which criteria it does not currently meet and what it must do to meet all of them.

The Evaluative Criteria are discussed in detail in Chapter II of A *Handbook of Accreditation* and in Chapter III of this *Guide*.

The discussion of the Evaluative Criteria must change with each report for continued candidacy. Through its successive Self-Study Reports, the candidate institution demonstrates not only that it still meets the Evaluative Criteria for Candidacy, but also continues to move closer to the goal of fulfilling the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation.

It is particularly important that an institution seeking or maintaining candidacy with the Commission provide explicit evidence that it meets each of the thirteen General Institutional Requirements. Even though this information has already been sent to the Commission, the Requirements must be identified and addressed as an integral part of the Self-Study Report. The team, the review process, and the Commission must be able to judge that the Requirements are met. This will continue to be an integral part of the Self-Study Report throughout the candidacy period and as the institution seeks initial accreditation.

CHAPTER V

FOCUSED EVALUATIONS

Institutional Report for a Focused Evaluation

Focused evaluations do not require the comprehensive institutional self-study outlined in the rest of the *Guide* nor do they require a comprehensive Self-Study Report. An institution's preparation for a focused evaluation will vary in nature and scope according to the specific areas to be examined. Its report will center on those areas. In addition, the institution's materials for the evaluation will include any documents it believes the team should have before arriving on campus, including but not limited to relevant portions of the Commission's Basic Institutional Data Forms, catalogs, and faculty and student handbooks.

The report any given institution prepares will be shaped by the specific issues that prompted the evaluation, but all institutional reports for focused evaluations will have the following structure:

- an introduction;
- an examination of the area of focus and/or the requested change;
- a summary rationale for any requested changes in the institution's Statement of Affiliation Status.

In the **introduction** the institution briefly cites the Commission action or policy that prompted the evaluation, discusses the process by which the report has been prepared, and explains the organization of the report.

The **body** of a focused report is an evaluation of the areas to be examined. If the focused evaluation is being conducted to assess progress in responding to previous Commission concerns, this section of the report will explain the actions that have been taken since the last evaluation. It should evaluate the progress made and indicate any further actions that may be planned. Depending on the areas of focus, this part of the report may be supplemented by audited financial statements, Board minutes, curriculum information, or other appendices which document the progress summarized in the report itself.

If the focused evaluation is being conducted under the Commission's *"Policy on Changes Affecting the Affiliation Status of an*

Institution," this section of the report must address these five points:

- a concise statement of the requested change and the reasons for proposing it;
- evidence that the institution has the necessary internal and external approvals to initiate the change;
- evidence that the purposes of the change are clear and appropriate to the institution's purposes;
- an analysis of the anticipated effect of the proposed change on the other parts of the institution;
- evidence that the institution has organized adequate human, financial, and physical resources and processes to initiate, maintain and monitor the change and to assure acceptable quality.

For further information on institutional change, see Chapter VI of *A Handbook of Accreditation.*

The last major component of an institutional report for a focused evaluation is a summary rationale for any changes requested in the institution's Statement of Affiliation Status.

The institutional report for a focused evaluation has no required length. Some will be brief; others will be lengthy. The guideline in preparing the report should be that it cover each of these essential elements adequately.

For further information on the focused evaluation, see Chapter V of *A Handbook of Accreditation* and Chapter VI of *A Manual for the Evaluation Visit.*

APPENDIX

RESOURCES FOR SELF-STUDY

Resources from the Commission

A primary resource for information on self-study and evaluation is the Commission itself. Commission materials pertinent to an institution's evaluation are usually sent two years before the evaluation visit.

Papers and Publications. Commission staff members have developed papers on the evaluation and accreditation process which are available on request. Articles of particular interest to persons in higher education appear in the fall issue of the *Quarterly*.

A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement. This document has proven to be a valuable source of useful advice about self-study, evaluation, and institutional improvement. It includes papers submitted by presenters at Annual Meetings, including the Self-Study Institute and the General Interest Sessions. Self-Study Institute materials provide discussions on the interrelationships of the Evaluative Criteria for particular groups of institutions and on specific topics related to each of the criteria. $7.50.

The Combined Data and Evaluation Form. This document illustrates a "system approach" for doing self-study and evaluation for accreditation. It contains collections of questions about the functions and operations of an institution organized within an evaluative framework according to the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation. The questions and their arrangement provide guidance for inquiry and research. $4.00.

Selected Self-Study Reports

Representatives of institutions undertaking self-studies often ask for "good examples" from other institutions. The staff of the Commission have identified a number of such examples.

In identifying these examples, the Commission wishes to emphasize that they are not the only good examples it has received; that these materials are examples, not prescribed models; and that no successful self-study merely replicates the self-study of another institution. These examples should be used to stimulate each self-study steering committee to develop its own self-study plan and report—a plan and report that are uniquely suited to its own purposes, organization and programs. There is no one "best pattern" for an institutional self-study or report. Institutional representatives should note that any pre-1982 reports they may have on hand do not address the Evaluative Criteria, which is now required in the Self-Study Report.

Officials of these institutions have agreed to provide copies at cost of their self-study reports to representatives of other North Central Association institutions engaged in the self-study

process. Please contact the institutions directly. In addition, the Commission places a number of Self-Study Reports on display for those attending the Self-Study Institute held in Chicago in early spring during the NCA Annual Meeting.

1. **Highland Park Community College, Highland Park MI 48203**

   Highland Park Community College is a public, state- and locally-supported, coeducational institution, accredited at the associate's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1921. Enrollment: 2,214.

   A Self-Study Report prepared for a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation in 1986-87. Highland Park Community College organized its one-volume self-study around the Commission's four Evaluative Criteria. The self-study process achieved wide-ranging participation from all its constituencies by establishing a Steering Committee composed of representatives from 11 major areas of the College. Students, faculty, administrators and support staff participated in extensive statistical/opinion surveys to assist in providing a comprehensive evaluation of the institution's educational programs and resources.

   Contact: Calvin Trent, Director of Management Information and Planning

2. **Northeastern Oklahoma A & M College, Miami OK 74354**

   A public, co-educational institution, accredited at the associate's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1925. Enrollment: 2,255.

   A Self-Study Report prepared for a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation in 1986-87. The Self-Study and its appendices resulted from an on-going process involving the total institution which emphasizes assessment (Criterion three) and planning (Criterion four). The College assessed its functioning units and curricular units. Thirty-one study-committee reports and survey instruments were summarized. Of special value is the inclusion of strengths, concerns and recommendations for the next decade as viewed by members of the various committees. One, three, and ten-year goals were established. These will be reviewed and modified as a part of an on-going process which will provide guidelines for institutional planning and decision-makers.

   Contact: Charles H. Angle, Vice President for Academic Affairs

3. **Colorado Technical College, Colorado Springs CO 80907**

   A private, for-profit institution, accredited at the bachelor's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1980. Enrollment: 744.

   A report prepared for a focused evaluation in 1986-87 as required by the comprehensive evaluation of 1983-84. The report presented in a balanced fashion information related to the two major concerns of the last evaluation team: the ability of the institution to find financing adequate to support staffing and equipment, and the ability of the institution to develop a realistic and useful long-range planning process.

The story presented in the report, and confirmed as accurate by the evaluation team, is of an institutional renaissance marked by enhancement of faculty size and compensation and by immediate plans for a new campus to house both the new equipment and a rapidly growing student body. The report clearly outlines the steps taken by the institution to bring about the change. The planning document explains the plans of the institution to build on the change. Because of the excellent progress made by the institution, the focused evaluation team recommended that the date of the next comprehensive evaluation be changed from 1988-89 to 1990-91.

Contact: David D. O'Donnell, President

4. Washington Technical College, Marietta OH 45750

Washington Technical College is a two-year, state-assisted technical college, accredited at the associate's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1979. Enrollment: 864.

The self-study process was organized around the Self-Study committee which was composed of the President, Dean of Instruction, Dean of Administrative Services, and a General Studies Coordinator. The Dean of Administrative Services served as the Self-Study Coordinator.

Each academic department and administrative division was asked to provide a unit evaluation narrative. These narratives briefly described the unit and its function. However, the thrust of the narrative was an evaluation of the unit's strengths and concerns along with responses, where appropriate, to the previous team's recommendations. These narratives were then reviewed by the committee. Following any needed communication with the units, the narratives were edited for inclusion in the report. The committee was responsible for providing the introduction and integrating the unit evaluations into the institutional evaluation in terms of the General Institutional Requirements and the Evaluative Criteria.

Contact: Edward W. Holzapfel, Jr., Dean of Administrative Services

5. Lake Forest College, Lake Forest IL 60045

Lake Forest College is a private, not-for-profit, coeducational, liberal arts college, affiliated with the Presbyterian Church and accredited at the master's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1913. Enrollment: 1,122.

A Self-Study Report prepared for a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation in 1985-86. A self-study steering committee broadly representative of the different elements of the College prepared the report, drawing heavily on the ongoing process of self-study built into the governance system and using as a focus the recently adopted Mission Statement. The report is organized into three main parts, with each part devoted to discussion of the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation. The first part speaks to the first Evaluative Criterion by a close examination of the new Mission Statement. The second and larger section, consisting of Chapters Two through Five, measures the College against the second and third Evaluative Criteria by looking at various components of the College, such as the human resources, the

academic program, academic and non-academic support services, and finances and decision-making. The last part is devoted to the fourth Evaluative Criterion and specifically discusses the College's planning process and evaluates it effectiveness for achieving the goals of the Mission Statement.

Contact: Carol Gayle, Assistant to the President and Lecturer in History

6. **Lewis University, Romeoville IL 60441**

Lewis University is a private coeducational institution sponsored by the Christian Brothers, a Roman Catholic teaching order, accredited at the master's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1963. Enrollment: 2099.

A Self-Study Report prepared for a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation in 1986-87. Lewis University organized its report around the four Evaluative Criteria, and a large number of faculty and administrative officers participated in the process. The Report emphasized the significant changes which had come to Lewis University since the last evaluation and the progress that it had made in student recruitment, faculty-administration relations, and finances. The report also addressed the University's off-campus and part-time programs in the Chicago area; most of these programs are in applied fields and are designed to serve the needs of adult part-time students.

Contact: Kathleen Owens, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

7. **Marygrove College, Detroit MI 48221**

Marygrove College is a private, not-for-profit, urban, coeducation institution, affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church and accredited at the master's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1926. Enrollment: 954.

A Self-Study Report prepared for a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation in 1986-87. Marygrove began the process for institutional self-study in 1982-83 through the development of a comprehensive long-range plan. This analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses formed the basis both for strategic planning and for the self-study.

A Self-Study Steering Committee was appointed by the President of the College and organized along the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation. The sub-groups of the Steering Committee worked to plan the self-study process for their particular sections, organizing the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data related to the criteria.

An important component of the process was focus group discussion about specific evaluative sections of the self-study. Seventeen such group meetings were held, involving well over one hundred college faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, and students. Members of the Steering Committee were present for each of these meetings. In most cases, members of the focus groups received descriptive material about that particular section of the self-study in advance of the meeting, as well as a set of

discussion questions. The Steering Committee met following the focus groups to organize the information, review the meeting outcomes, and plan for their inclusion in the self-study. Even though this process was time-consuming, the Steering Committee believes that the focus group model allowed beneficial discussion with many members of the Marygrove community about issues which concern them directly, thereby helping to build an institution-wide sense of ownership of the self-study process and its results. These focus group discussions provided valuable insight into current college operations and supplemented other modes of quantitative data collection.

The philosophy underscoring development of the process for self-study at Marygrove is essentially the same one used during the long-range planning process. It assumes the willingness and ability of members of the college community to become involved in issues which concern them directly while, at the same time, recognizing that work overloads do not permit much time to be given over to extra projects. As a result, the process was centralized in the early stages with the senior administration and steering committee meeting to organize and plan ways to involve the college community in a feasible and meaningful way without overburdening it. The middle stages were decentralized and included collection of data, organization of the descriptive sections of the narrative, and the focus group discussion. Following those group discussions, the process was again centralized with the writer and Steering Committee preparing the final content of the report. Drafts of the report were widely circulated. Despite the imperfections of the process and limited resources and time, Marygrove College believes that its institutional self-study was comprehensive and participative, carefully integrated within the College's long range planning.

Contact: John R. Novak, Jr., Academic Dean

8. Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, Milwaukee WI 53202

Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design is a private, coeducational institution, accredited at the bachelor's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1987. Enrollment: 333.

A Self-Study Report prepared for a comprehensive evaluation for initial accreditation in 1986-87. Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design offers professional education in the visual arts; its programs emphasize both fine and applied arts. The Institute organized this report for initial accreditation around the four Evaluative Criteria and provided much detailed evidence supporting it claim to meet the Criteria. Emphasis was given to the curriculum, faculty, and their qualifications, student achievements, physical facilities, and the overall financial status of the Institute. The questions addressed are common among all institutions seeking initial status with the Commission.

Contact: Robert L. Smith, Academic Dean

9. Marian College of Fond du Lac, Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Marian College of Fond du Lac is a private coeducational institution affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, accredited at the master's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1960. Enrollment: 347.

A report for an evaluation focused on the College's request to offer the master's (professional curricula) degree in 1986-87. For many years Marian College of Fond du Lac has offered undergraduate work in education preparing teachers for both public and private schools. The College wished to extend its work in education to the master's degree level; the new program is designed for practicing teachers who wish to expand their knowledge and improved their teaching skills. The report outlined in detail the planning of the new program, the courses that would be offered and how they would be organized and reviewed, and the qualifications of the faculty who would teach at the graduate level. Special emphasis was given to the common conceptual framework for both graduate and undergraduate programs and the ways in which the graduate process would build on the strengths of the baccalaureate program and on the College's Catholic traditions.

Contact: Henry J. Lindborg, Vice President for Academic Affairs

10. University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, Oshkosh WI 54901

The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh is a comprehensive, public, coeducation institution accredited at the master's degree-granting level. First accredited: 1915. Enrollment: 9,610.

A Self-Study Report prepared for a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation in 1986-87. The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh built its report around the recommendations of the 1977 NCA study creating a theme-centered report: "Meeting the Challenge." The university has experienced a steady growth in student quality and number of student FTE since the 1977 report. The 1987 report examines the path the University has traveled, evaluates its accomplishments and identifies its concerns. In July of 1985 a coordinator was named; the Self-Study Committee was selected from University constituencies. Members headed task forces which wrote parts of the document and four members of the Steering Committee served as the editorial and writing team. A major, university-wide planning process, begun in 1980, set six-year goals and was central to the University's accomplishment and report.

Contact: Edward M. Penson, Chancellor

11. DePaul University, Chicago IL 60604

DePaul University is a comprehensive, private, not-for-profit institution, affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church and accredited at the doctoral degree-granting level. First accredited: 1925. Enrollment: 9,244.

The Self-Study Report prepared for a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation in 1986-87. The self-study process and preparation of the report were guided by an eleven person Steering Committee, including the Vice President/Dean of Faculties (Chair), and six tenured faculty, and the Assistant to the Vice President, who acted as coordinator of the self-study and edited the final report. The design of the format enabled the appropriate administrators and faculty to participate directly in the preparation of the unit reports. Each of three issues composing special emphasis

review was assigned to a University-wide ad hoc committee, and each of the three committees, in turn, surveyed the appropriate constituencies as a basis for their findings.

In keeping with the Commission's criteria, the report states the mission and purpose of the University, assesses the adequacy of resources to meet its institutional commitments, evaluates how well De Paul has fulfilled its commitments through its programs and services, and projects resources needed to make comparable progress over the next decade. The University also took the opportunity to incorporate the study into an ongoing strategic planning effort by focusing on three important University-wide issues: the quality of faculty life, the Liberal Studies Program, and undergraduate academic advising.

Contact: Patricia Ewers, Vice President/Dean of Faculties

12. University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago IL 60680

The University of Illinois at Chicago is a comprehensive, public university, accredited at the doctoral degree-granting level. First accredited: 1970. Enrollment: 24,560.

A Self-Study Report prepared for comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation in 1986-87. Since the last comprehensive review in 1976-77, the University of Illinois at Chicago had undergone significant changes, the most important of which was the consolidation in 1982 of the two Chicago campuses of the University of Illinois—the University of Illinois Medical Center and the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle—into a single campus called the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). The single volume UIC Self-Study Report summarizes the historical development of the two antecedent campuses, giving special attention in the Introduction to the evaluation of UIC's current Scope and Mission Statement. Chapter I is devoted to the reorganization of the campus since 1976, including consolidation and its aftermath. The remainder of the Self-Study Report consists of: 1) a description of instructional programs, the process for evaluation of programs, and the results of an examination of undergraduate and general education (Chapter II); 2) a description of the organization and services of the Division of Student Affairs (Chapter III); 3) a section on faculty and the research and learning environments, including its support of instruction and research (Chapter IV); 4) a report of administrative services and current physical issues (Chapter V); 5) a look at the University and its links to the larger community (Chapter VI); and 6) a chapter on UIC's current initiative and potential for development, and its conformity to the Evaluative Criteria (Chapter VII).

Contact: Ronald Legon, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

13. University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln NE 68588

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is a comprehensive and land-grant university with a major research mission, accredited at the doctoral degree-granting level. First accredited: 1913. Enrollment: 20,902.

A Self-Study Report prepared for a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation in 1986-87. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln turned the opportunity presented by the NCA Self-Study into a collegial process to begin strategic long-grange planning. The Steering Committee planned a Self-Study that would produce a document to be used widely and updated periodically with ease during the next decade. Members of the select Steering Committee chaired ten task forces with about a dozed faculty, administrators, staff and students on each one. Four task forces dealt with "mission-specific" undergraduate education; graduate and professional education; research and creative activity; public services and outreach and the other six task forces focused upon "resource and support" aspects of UNL libraries and computing; faculty; staff; student life; fiscal support; facilities. The Steering Committee and its Executive Council coordinated the work of the task forces in preparation of materials for the Self-Study. The NCA Evaluative Criteria pervaded all stages of the Self-Study process with special emphasis on planning. Three hundred representatives of the campus community reviewed drafts of the Self-Study before its preparation in final form. The text made continual reference to essential data in the appendices and concluded with a summary chapter on the present state and future direction of UNL

Contact: John Yost, Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies

Other Resources

The following are some other resources on self-study and evaluation that may be of interest. Information on availability of these documents can be obtained from the publishers or sponsoring organizations.

- Philip Chamberlain's *Academic Institution—Building Model*, a self-study process rooted in the strategic construct, specifies how to organize, analyze, and interpret institutional data using nine interactive institutional and environmental variables. The model constructs an index for assessing effectiveness of the exchange of institutional outcomes for constituent provided resources and support (Department of Higher Education, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405).

- Peter T. Ewell is editor of *Assessing Educational Outcomes*, New Directions for Institutional Research No. 47 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1985), which provides an overview of many facets of research on student outcomes, shows how outcomes research programs have been organized and implemented in various settings, and provides some basic technical advice about the design of particular types of studies and the communication of results. Ewell is also the author of an NCHEMS Executive Overview, *Information on Student Outcomes: How to Get It and How to Use It* (Boulder, CO: NCHEMS, 1983), which provides pragmatic information on conceptual dimensions of student outcomes, building a student-outcomes data base, and applying student-outcomes information to institutional decision-making.

- *Effective Evaluation* (Jossey-Bass, 1981) by Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln presents an approach combining responsive evaluation and naturalistic methodologies, and discusses how to limit and focus an inquiry and ensure the validity, reliability and objectivity of its findings.

- *Improving Academic Management* (Jossey-Bass, 1980), edited by Paul Jedamus and Marvin W. Peterson, includes sections on Academic Planning and Research, Assessing Performance, and Allocating Resources that treat measuring institutional effectiveness.

- George Keller's *Academic Strategy, The Management Revolution in Higher Education* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983) describes the significant shifts of colleges and universities to a new style of management based on strategic planning and offers an agenda for the future of higher education.

- H.R. Kells' *Self-Study Processes, A Guide for Postsecondary Institutions* (Macmillan, 1983) is designed as a handbook for self-study steering committee members and other participants in self-study and accreditation activities. Kells describes the context for and the concept of self-study and suggests general models for self-study. Specific information, checklists and charts are provided for various phases of the self-study process and major sources of additional information are identified.

- Richard I. Miller's *The Assessment of College Performance* (Jossey-Bass, 1979) provides practical assistance in institutional self-assessment in the form of evaluation strategies, models, case studies and specific evaluation aids such as tables, checklists, and rating forms. Miller identifies a number of measurable characteristics of postsecondary institutions that, together, determine an institution's overall quality or effectiveness.

- *Qualitative Data Analysis, A Sourcebook of New Methods* (Sage Publications, 1984) by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Haberman, presents a conceptual framework and a variety of techniques for qualitative data analysis. This book is particularly helpful in understanding the contrasts and similarities between qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Its emphasis upon the analysis of data and techniques of conclusion drawing/verification substantively expands the usefulness and applicability of this approach to evaluation. The book is complemented by an article, "Drawing Valid Meaning from Qualitative Data: Toward a Shared Craft," in *Educational Researcher*, (May, 1984).

- *The College Student Experiences Questionnaire* by C. Robert Pace provides a measure of quality of effort students put into using the facilities and opportunities provided for their learning and development in college. (Requires external scoring.) (Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA Graduate School of Education, 405 Hildgard Ave., Los Angeles CA 90024.)

- Michael Quinn Patton's *Qualitative Evaluation Methods* (Sage, 1980) focuses on strategies for generating valid and credible qualitative information which are useful in self-study. It also provides samples of different research strategies and evaluative instruments.

- *Understanding Accreditation* (Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1983), by Kenneth E. Young, Charles M. Chambers, H.R. Kells, et al., is a comprehensive examination of how

accreditation works, who participates in it, what impact it has on institutions and their various constituencies, and how it can be used to assess institutional achievements and plan improvements.

- Educational Testing Service has a number of instruments for institutional self-study, evaluation, planning and faculty evaluation which might serve as useful guidelines or as a source of ideas. They include the *Institutional Goals Inventory* (IGI), *Institutional Functioning Inventory* (IFI), *Community Colleges Goals Inventory* (CCGI), *Program Self-Assessment Service* (PSAS), *Small College Goals Inventory* (SCGI), *Student Instructional Report* (SIR), and *Student Reactions to College* (SRC). ETS also offers *THE ACADEMIC PROFILE*, a test of general education featuring a matrix design with four skills (reading, writing, critical thinking, and using mathematical data) tested in three academic areas (humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences). (Educational Testing Service, College and University Programs, Princeton NJ 08541-0001, 609/921-9000.)

- The American College Testing Program has a number of instruments, including evaluation/survey instruments—*Student Opinion Survey*, *Withdrawing/Nonreturning Student Survey*, and *Alumni Survey*—offered through the ACT Evaluation/Survey Service. The College Outcomes Measures Program (COMP) measures general education and intellectual skills through an activity inventory, a composite examination, and an objective test. (The American College Testing Program, P.O. Box 168, Iowa City IA 52243, 319/337-1000.)

- A number of institutions have been involved in the programs of the National Center for Higher Education Management Service (NCHEMS) and are familiar with the outcome-oriented planning, management and evaluation framework developed by NCHEMS. NCHEMS has an extensive battery of data collection schemes and information system constructs as well as facilities, students, finances, course information, staff, and goal achievement measures. (NCHEMS, P.O. Drawer P, Boulder CO 80302, 303/447-1980.)

- A battery of management analysis and development instruments and training elements is available from HEMI, the Higher Education Management Institute. (Higher Education Management Institute, 2699 S. Bayshore Dr., Suite 1000A, Coconut Grove FL 33133, 305/854-2318.)

- Institutions interested in developing expertise in the assessment of experiential learning will find materials and assistance available from the Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning (CAEL), an educational association created to foster experiential learning and the valid and reliable assessment of outcomes. (CAEL, 10840 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 203, Columbia MD 21044, 301/997-3535.)

- The Council on Graduate Schools (CGS) has developed some instruments and questionnaires to assist in the evaluation of graduate education programs. (The Council on Graduate Schools, One DuPont Circle, Washington DC 20036.)

- *Bibliography on Postsecondary Accreditation*, by H.R. Kells, Laura Kells, and M.T. Neal (1984) is available from the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation. (COPA, One Dupont Circle, Suite 305, Washington DC 20036.)

- *The Board's Role in Accreditation*, published by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, is a useful introduction to the subject which recommends specific ways in which a Board's role in accreditation activities may be enhanced. (AGB, One Dupont Circle, Suite 400, Washington DC 20036.)

- NACUBO *Writers on Financial Management* includes sixty-three articles, many of which provide ways of evaluating effective financial management, compiled by the National Association of College and University Business Officers. (NACUBO Order Desk, One Dupont Circle, Suite 510, Washington DC 20036.)

- *Ratio Analysis in Higher Education*, available from Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co., is a guide to assist colleges and universities in assessing the institution's financial condition. The uses of ratios, their trends and interinstitutional comparisons are displayed and explained. (Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co., 303 E. Wacker Dr., Chicago IL 60601.)

- Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith's publication, *How to Read a Financial Report*, provides detailed information and illustrations about how to analyze and interpret a corporate financial statement. (Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith Inc., One Liberty Plaza, 165 Broadway, New York NY 10080.)

- The *Chronicle of Higher Education* is also an excellent source of current information on publications and meetings relating to evaluation and assessment.

INDEX OF COMMISSION POLICIES

The following is an index of Commission policies with references to where information related to each policy can be found in *A Handbook of Accreditation*, *A Guide to Self-Study for Commission Evaluation*, and *A Manual for the Evaluation Visit*. The index appears in all three publications and is designed as a cross-reference. H/ identifies the *Handbook*, M/ the *Manual*, and G/ the *Guide* followed by the appropriate page number(s). The number ( ) following each policy identifies its internal policy number.

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A GUIDE TO SELF-STUDY
FOR COMMISSION EVALUATION

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